

MasterCard, American Express or Discover), or an Electronic Benefits Transfer Card (EBT in select areas). The front screen 24 prompts a cardholder to enter his or her four digit personal identification number (PIN) assigned by his or her bank.

5 The cardholder selects the type of transaction desired: withdraw cash, balance inquiry or balance transfer. If the cardholder chooses to withdraw cash, the ATM 10 prompts the cardholder to choose the type of account the cash is to be withdrawn from: a checking account, a savings account or a credit card cash advance.

10 If the cardholder chooses a balance inquiry, the ATM 10 prompts the cardholder to choose the type of account to inquire about: checking, savings or credit card. If the cardholder chooses a balance transfer, the ATM 10 prompts the cardholder to choose the type of account where the funds will be debited and the type of account where the funds will be credited.

15 If the cardholder selects the withdraw cash or the balance transfer options, the ATM 10 prompts the cardholder to enter the amount of money desired to withdraw or transfer. The front screen 24 states in what increment the cash may be withdrawn and also states the maximum amount that may be withdrawn during one transaction. For the withdraw cash option, the front screen 24 will state that the owner or operator of the ATM 10 has assessed a surcharge amount to the cardholder for each withdrawal and provides the cardholder with an opportunity to opt out of the transaction at that time.

20 If the cardholder chooses to complete the transaction, the ATM 10 will communicate the requested transaction type, the transaction amount and the cardholder information to the acquiring processor, such as Concord, Core Data, etc., subscribed to by the ATM owner through the telephone lines via the modem 56 inside the ATM 10. The processor's computer mainframe system is connected to all the major networks, such as Cirrus, Plus, etc., which accesses databases on all cardholder accounts to determine if the cardholder has utilized a card that has an open account and has sufficient funds to process the requested transaction. If the transaction requested is approved, the cardholder's account is debited for the amount of cash requested plus any surcharge. The processor then collects these amounts from the cardholder's bank and reimburses the ATM owner and/or operator for the

full amount of the settlement funds (amount of cash withdrawn) in addition to any surcharge amounts collected, within 1-2 business days.

If the cardholder selects a cash withdrawal and the cardholder has sufficient funds in its account, the transaction is processed and the ATM 10 dispenses the requested amount of cash from the cash dispenser 52 and sends the cash to the tray 34 for the cardholder to retrieve. For each transaction type, once the transaction is complete, the ATM 10 will print a receipt for the cardholder at the print-out window 36, listing the details of the transaction.

The miniature ATM of the present invention is thus, suspended in the air behind a wall, without the need for any traditional pedestal used when prior miniature ATMs were located in a customer area.

While the specific embodiment has been illustrated and described, numerous modifications come to mind without significantly departing from the spirit of the invention, and the scope of protection is only limited by the scope of the accompanying Claims.